

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Previously Presented) A computer-implemented method for a software provider (25) of enabling a software-acquiring entity (20) to arrive from an existent first signed piece of code (11) executable on a machine at a second signed piece of code (12, 13) executable on the machine, both pieces of code (11, 12, 13) having been generated by use of a first software archive generator (2) under use of generation instructions (8), comprising the step of:

providing to said software-acquiring entity (20) a difference code (4, 5), said difference code comprising the steps necessary to arrive from said first signed piece of code (11) at said second signed piece of code (12, 13), said difference code (4, 5) is usable at said software-acquiring entity (20); and

combining said difference code with said first signed piece of code (11) by a second software archive generator (7) to generate said second signed piece of code (12, 13), whereby said second software archive generator (7) is fed with those generation instructions (8) that were used by said first software archive generator (2) for the generation of both pieces of code (11, 12, 13).

2. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 1, wherein the generation instructions (8) are provided to the software-acquiring entity (20) by the software provider (25) together with the second software archive generator (7).

3. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 1, wherein the pieces of code (11, 12, 13) are signed using a private key (14).

4. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claims 1, wherein the signed pieces of code (11, 12, 13) are stored in a storage unit (1) at the software provider (25).

5. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claims 1, wherein the difference code (4, 5) is created by the first software archive generator (2), while said first software archive generator (2) generates the second signed piece of code (12, 13).

6. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claims 1, wherein for more than two pieces of code (11, 12, 13) being stored, the difference code (4, 5) is generated only between a subset of said pieces of code (11, 12, 13).

7. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 6, wherein for arriving from the first piece of code (11) to the second piece of code (13) several difference codes (4, 5) are required, these difference codes (4, 5) are merged to a single difference code to be provided to the software-acquiring entity (20).

8. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claims 1, wherein the first and second piece of code (11, 12, 13) are identified at the software provider (25) by deriving a corresponding identifier from a request (16) received from the software-acquiring entity (20).

9. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method for a software-acquiring entity (20) of arriving from an existent first signed piece of code (11) executable on a machine at a second signed piece of code (12, 13) executable on the machine, both pieces of code (11, 12, 13) having been generated at a software provider (25) by use of a first software archive generator (2) under use of generation instructions (8), comprising the steps of:

sending a code amendment request (16) to said software provider (25) for the delivery of a difference code (4, 5) which comprises the steps necessary to arrive from said first signed piece of code (11) at said second signed piece of code (12, 13),

receiving said difference code (4, 5),

combining said difference code (4, 5) with said first signed piece of code (11) by use of a second software archive generator (7), thereby generating said second signed piece of code (12, 13), whereby said second software archive generator (7) is fed with those generation instructions (8) that were used by said first software archive generator (2) for the generation of both pieces of code (11, 12, 13).

10. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 9, wherein the generation instructions (8) are received from the software provider (25) together with the second software archive generator (7).

11. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claim 9, wherein the pieces of code (11, 12, 13) are signed by use of a private key (14) and the signature (Sig 11, Sig 12, Sig 13) is verifiable by use of a corresponding public key (15).

12. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method according to claims 9, wherein the first and second piece of code (11, 12, 13) are identified by the software-acquiring entity (20) by giving a corresponding identifier in the code amendment request (16).

13. (Previously Presented) A program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps according to claim 1.

14. (Canceled).

15. (Previously Presented) Code amendment enabler tangibly embodied in hardware for enabling a software-acquiring entity (20) to arrive from an existent first signed piece of code (11) at a second signed piece of code (12, 13), both pieces of code (11, 12, 13) having been generated by use of a first software archive generator (2) under use of generation instructions (8), comprising

a difference code generator (10) for generating a difference code (4, 5) that comprises the steps necessary to arrive from said first signed piece of code (11) at said second signed piece of code (12, 13), which difference code (4, 5) is usable at said software-acquiring entity (20) to be combined with said first signed piece of code (11) by a second software archive generator (7) to generate said second signed piece of code (12, 13), whereby said second software archive generator (7) is fed with the generation instructions (8),

an output unit (3) for providing to said software-acquiring entity (20) said difference code (4, 5).

16. (Previously Presented) Code amendment enabler tangibly embodied in hardware according to claim 15, further comprising an input unit (24) for receiving from said software-acquiring entity (20) a code amendment request (16) for the delivery of said difference code (4, 5).

17. (Previously Presented) Code amendment enabler tangibly embodied in hardware according to claim 15, further comprising a first software archive generator (2) for generating said pieces of code (11, 12, 13) under use of generation instructions (8).

18. (Previously Presented) Code amendment device tangibly embodied in hardware for arriving from an existent first signed piece of code (11) at a second signed piece of code (12, 13), both pieces of code (11, 12, 13) having been generated at a software provider (25) by use of a first software archive generator (2) under use of generation instructions (8), comprising a second software archive generator (7) for combining a received difference code (4, 5) with said first signed piece of code (11), thereby generating said second signed piece of code (12, 13), whereby said second software archive generator (7) is to be fed with those generation instructions (8) that were used by said first software archive generator (2) for the generation of both pieces of code (11, 12, 13).

19. (Previously Presented) Code amendment device tangibly embodied in hardware according to claim 18, further comprising an input/output unit (6) for sending a code amendment request (16) to said software provider (25) and for receiving said difference code (4, 5).